God.
266.023
Col/For
59300

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016

FOREIGN MISSIONS,

AND

MOSAIC TRADITIONS:

A Lecture

BY

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP COLENSO

(SIR JOHN BOWRING IN THE CHAIR.)

God
266.023
Col/For
59300.

LONDON:
EMILY FAITHFULL, PRINTER IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY, VICTORIA PRESS,
83A FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.

LECTURE BY BISHOP COLENSO,

Tuesday Evening, May 23rd, 1865.

On the evening of Tuesday May 23rd, a lecture was delivered at the Institution, Edwards Street, Portman Square, by the Right Reverend Doctor Colenso, Bishop of Natal. The chair was taken by Sir John Bowring, and the hall was filled in all parts.

Sir John Bowring, who was received with cheers, said:—Ladies and Gentlemen,—Permit me to say that I feel proud to occupy the position I do upon the present occasion; for in these days of debate and discussion, when so many sandy foundations are giving way and so many idols and pillars of error are sinking under the weight of their own rottenness, I cannot but feel that it is not only a duty, but a privilege, to associate for the support of those who perseveringly, honestly, and reverently, are seeking to follow the truth wherever it may lead them. (Cheers.) The world, on all sides, appears to be in a state of agitation almost amounting to insanity, continually demanding more light, more truth, more knowledge, more love. (Hear, hear.) There are those who with iron hoof are endeavouring to suppress free discussion, (Cheers.)—those who say they will visit with ignominious expulsion the great discoverers and revealers of astronomical, of historical, of chemical, of geological truths. But they must be disappointed. (Hear, hear.) We know that there are many who tell us that doubt is "devil-born" and some of them have even gone so far as to say that doubt is intimately associated with damnation. But my experience teaches me to

look with great sympathy and solicitude upon the doubting man. The state of his mind requires to be viewed with consideration and tenderness. Our great philosopher Sir Isaac Newton once said he did not believe that true religion could ever be reached except through doubt and scepticism; and what are we to do with those men who tell us that they will never doubt, who say that no lightning or tempest shall ever purify their mental atmosphere, that no cascades shall ever help forward the stream of knowledge in its course to that ocean of truth where all is clear and bright? (Hear, hear.) My friends, there are certain classes of men in the world whose position we can well understand. We must treat with regard those who look upon the controversies going on around them, not seeing the new revelations by the light of day, but who yet, anxious to learn, resign themselves complacently to the authority of others. Something is to be said for those who thus seek mental and intellectual repose; but there is another class who say they have a most earnest desire for free discussion, and that they apprehend nothing from it, but, at the same time, they insist beforehand that the discussion shall terminate with certain predetermined conclusions. They say "Fly, fly! only we must clip your wings before you begin. Go, go! but we must fetter your limbs before you start. Run, run! but remember you must only arrive at one particular conclusion. We will have no submission to the judgment of others." But we must look around us and draw convictions from our own thoughtfulness. One of the worst features that characterise the opponents of inquiry in these days, is that we have to deal with the jokes and gibes and frivolities of witticism and ridicule. Men, however, are now entering in a proper spirit into that field of inquiry and discussion which involves all those important questions in which we are so deeply concerned. Society is now rapidly arriving at the just conclusion that religion must be progressive. The mind of man in these days can no more be satisfied to rest upon the theories and traditions of the past, than can the modern chemist to limit his knowledge to the teachings of

Albertus Magnus, or the astronomer to the system taught by Ptolemy. (Cheers.)

Religion must follow the ordinary law of advancement. If not allowed to do so it can no longer be a comfort and a consolation to man; and legislators must be brought to understand that the time has passed away when a system of religion can be forced upon society after it has ceased to be able to accommodate itself to the demands and conditions of a daily more and more enlightened age. (Cheers.)

I have travelled a good deal in my lifetime, and I remember once being told that no part of Bhuddism could stand but what is absolutely true. Yet that has been for ages, and is now the religion of 500,000,000 of human beings. (Hear, hear.) Our friend here has been in Africa and, no doubt, can tell you something about the state of religious feeling in that country. I have had many opportunities of watching and judging of the cause of the failure of missionary enterprise, especially amongst the Chinese. In China it is maintained that every child is born pure, and that if the child afterwards wander into error the responsibility lies with its parents and teachers. What then are you to do with a race of people like these, when you tell them you are sent to preach to them as a doctrine of that Christian religion to which you are seeking to convert them, that every child born to man is destined from its birth to eternal misery? (Hear, hear.) It is a doctrine more abominable than any that can be found in the whole of the records of heathenism. (Cheers.) The Buddhists endeavour to convey an idea of eternity in this way. "Look," they say, "at all the sands upon all the sea shores in the world. Once in every 10,000 years an angel comes and rémoves a single grain of that sand. The time occupied in the removal of the whole is as nothing compared with eternity." Now look at that pure, smiling, loving infant, looking with intelligence and tenderness into its mother's eyes; how can any religion approve itself to the mind of the father and mother of that child which teaches that if it should happen to die before it has undergone certain

processes, it will be made to suffer indescribable torture through all eternity's countless ages? (Cheers.) Another reason why I think missionaries often make but little progress amongst foreign nations, is that they are no respecters of persons. I mean that they show no deference or consideration for persons whose names and works have long been held in veneration by their fellow countrymen. For instance, English missionaries in China will treat the writings of Confucius with contempt, to the great disgust of the Chinese people. "Oh," says the missionary, "who was Confucius? He was not inspired." But yet Confucius was beyond doubt one of the best and wisest of men who have ever lived in any age of the world's history. I do not mean to say that in his character he possessed the glorious attributes of Jesus Christ, but I do say this, that in that man's history and teachings there is nothing whatever to which a good Christian can object. (Hear, hear.) Moreover, the Chinese have a language and a literature at least three or four times as old as our own, and when we enter the field against an ancient nation possessed of pretensions like these, what should be our proper course?

The missionary, however, goes into a Chinese family, and tells the master of the house without ceremony or apology, that his religion is nothing but "filthy rags," and he must give it up at once or go to everlasting perdition. The Chinaman says, naturally enough, "Well, I think you might treat our national faith with a little more courtesy than that." (Hear, hear.) Depend upon it that if our missionaries went out with a determination to find out and to recognise what was good in the systems they seek to upset, they would succeed much better than they do. (Hear.) There is no system of national religion which does not contain some element of good, and while there is much to be studied with advantage, even in the creeds of the Yakeers and the Dervishes of Central Asia, I have known nothing amongst even those poor people more intolerant than I have seen practised by the civilised people of Europe in the name of the Christian religion. I hope, how-

ever, soon to see the good work taken up in a proper spirit, and that it may soon proceed from good to better, and from better thence onward to perfection. I will now introduce to you the Bishop of Natal. (Cheers.)

The right reverend Bishop, who was received with long-continued cheering, then addressed the Meeting as follows:—

SIR JOHN BOWRING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

You expect of me this evening, I have no doubt, some account of the mission work in which I have been engaged for some years among the savage tribes of Zulu land. I remember when on a late occasion Dr. Livingstone was called upon to return thanks for his health having been drunk at a public festival in Bath, he prefaced his remarks with an apology for whatever defects might be discovered in his speech, on account of his having just returned from Africa, where he had for so long a period spoken nothing but the African tongue. In a somewhat similar manner I must ask you this evening to excuse me for reading my observations from a paper, for the fact is (as most of you probably know), that since my arrival in England I have been so deluged with "monitions" and "prohibitions," and one sort of alarming document and another, that I have scarcely been allowed any practice in speaking at all. (Laughter and cheers.) To all this, however, I have cheerfully submitted, knowing that I could reach my fellow men with my pen if I could not with my tongue (hear, hear), and that in my own diocese in Africa I could, at all events, speak all my mind without any of that kind of interruption.

I must also ask you to excuse me if I bring forward nothing new in my discourse of this evening. I have but a simple tale to tell of my missionary experience, and though my wish was not to leave England until I had told the whole of it, the great pressure of labour brought upon me by the causes to which I have before alluded, will prevent my giving at any great length the account of the state of mission work in South Africa. Nevertheless, I hope to lay before you such facts as

will lead you to believe you have not spent an hour or two unprofitably in listening to them. You will not probably expect to hear from me this evening an elaborate defence of all that has been done in the South African Mission. I do not mean to say that our work there has not been open to observation as to its defects, more especially by those who have only had an opportunity of inspecting the results of our labours during a short visit. At the same time many of those defects are more apparent than real, and were nothing more nor less than must have been expected in the trial of any system of missions whatever.

The actual question to be decided was whether any system at all was worth trying; whether any system having for its object the conversion of savages could be expected to do much good; whether, in fact, they were capable of receiving the benefits and teachings of Christianity in any shape? It was absolutely rendered a matter necessary for inquiry, whether those poor creatures did not belong to an inferior race and type altogether; and whether any real, practical good would result from the attempt to give them the instruction ordinarily conveyed by the agents of Christian Missions. We were told we must consider whether they were not a race of beings which must shortly altogether pass away in obedience to the inexorable law of progress, and give place, as many other wild tribes had done before, to those who were both intellectually and physically their superiors; whether, in fact, it was not better to leave them alone until they reached that inevitable contact with races in a higher state of civilisation, when they must ultimately die out and disappear. Such I imagine to have been the views entertained by some of those who took part in the discussion upon the African Missions at the Rooms of the Anthropological Society the other evening. There were many, no doubt, who did not sympathise with those views; many who did not attempt to disguise their misgivings as to the success of this or that particular system. It may be worth our while to devote a few minutes to the consideration of this par-

ticular question, namely, what good may be done, and what beneficial results may be expected to follow the prosecution of missionary labours in Africa ?

I presume that I am now addressing a body of intelligent and inquiring persons who will not shrink to look in the face the grand and undeniable discoveries of modern science, and who will not be shocked to learn that some of those discoveries are directly opposed to certain traditions of the Bible which we have all probably been taught to regard as inspired truths. There are certain statements contained in Scripture which it is now utterly impossible for any educated and intelligent person to accept in their literal signification. Such, for instance, are the averments that the whole of this universe around us was created less than 6,000 years ago; that the Hebrew tongue was at one time the only language known to the entire human race; that the whole earth was submerged by a deluge in the manner described; and that all mankind sprang from one single pair of human beings of whom one was made of the rib-bone of the other. It is generally taught upon Christian authority that the human race has degenerated and fallen; but we know from undeniable testimony that, on on the contrary, it has risen in the social scale, continuously from lower to higher. (Hear.) The manner in which the joke of a great statesman upon the subject of eternal punishments was received the other day with cheers and laughter at an assembly of divines showed clearly enough that that great and awful dogma of the Church was not conscientiously believed by the audience, especially when it was observed that the good bishop himself who presided did not attempt to interfere to check the mirth the statement had excited. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Disraeli declared himself, no doubt, on the side of the angels. (A laugh.) But there can be now no longer any doubts that the earliest known types of the human race,—the manufacturers of bone knives and flint-headed arrows—were not angels at all, but simply savages. It is contrary to all we know of the wondrous designs and arrange-

ments of the Great Creator, to suppose for a moment that He, having once created mankind angels, should have allowed them to relapse into the condition of wandering and untutored savages. I use the word "angels" in the way that the term is generally understood as representing beings of light, living in immediate proximity to the burning throne of God. It is far more reasonable and probable to believe what we are taught in the revelations of science, that for tens of thousands of years man has lived upon the earth, and that his intellect was gradually sharpened by necessity to invent different contrivances for the relief of his wants; that by regular steps he arrived at better methods of preparing his food, of constructing his home, of procuring medicines, until at length he gave himself governments and laws, (written first in rude letters upon wood, and afterwards carved in stone), and at last we come to the great results of civilisation, the "villainous saltpetre" and the cannon ball, the age of steam, of photography, and the telegraph.

In a word it is joyous and refreshing to know that we are not laboriously working to recover some of the immense space of ground that (according to what we have been taught) Adam must have lost by his one act of sin.

It is better far to learn that all the discoveries we have now achieved, have been the natural results of the gradual researches of science; that they have all been obtained by the common efforts of different members of the great human family, and that every fresh success has led to renewed exertions in various fields of enterprise, successively opened to their energy and perseverance. It is easier to believe that the passion for acquiring new territories in the bygone past, was permitted by God Himself for his own wise purposes, and that the great discoveries of science, and the times of their being made, were part of the divine will, is as certain as any of the truths we can derive from the Bible itself.

To believe this is as essential as it is to believe in any of the revelations which it has pleased God Himself to make to us of

His word and of His will. Some important questions immediately arise in connection with our present subject. Some of them relate to the condition of man, ages and ages ago, at a period respecting which the scraps of knowledge we but now and then obtain at long intervals are so scant and small, that we almost starve upon them, and as Sir Charles Lyell said at Bath, "It is hard to get the chill out of our bones."

"Wild in the woods the noble savage ran," says the poet, and it has even been made a question for serious debate, whether, after all, man did not spring direct from the monkey itself, or even that still more ridiculous creature, the bird called the penguin. (Laughter.)

There are some people who would be very much disgusted and shocked to consider that they may have had at some time or other, connection or relationship with such animals as the chimpanzee or the ourang-outang. (A laugh.) Though not with Mr. Disraeli on the side of the angels, I confess that I am not, on the other hand, on the side of the apes. At the same time, I confess that though not competent to form any very decided opinion upon the question, I think it is not too much to say that although our ancestors may not have been so bad or degraded as the animals I have alluded to, they were not worse than the bushmen of Africa that we have amongst us in the nineteenth century. We feel that our race must at all times have been some degrees above that low level of existence, upon which the theory of Darwin was based. I do not deny it to be true that a man who has been born intelligent, and afterwards well educated, may, by an habitual course of vicious and sinful acts, lose all his manly character, and approximate not only to the human savage, but perhaps also to the beast. What course of restoration the great Creator may have in store for this low race of beings we know not, but I speak now of Christian men, and from whatever source they may have sprung, we know that there is a spirit and a life within us which raise us far above the brute, and show us

59300

the image and reflection of the very Life, which is God Himself. There are wonderful things in God's creation which should make us hesitate to pronounce against those who seek to prosecute earnest and conscientious inquiries.

There are many instances in modern observation where the human form has covered so small an amount of intellect, that it is doubtful whether the idiotic human being has not been far surpassed by the brute in moral, and possibly in intellectual, capacity also. Something, therefore, beyond the mere human form, is necessary to ensure the possession of powers beyond those of the brute animal. The idiot has the form of a man, but through some defect somewhere his connection with the intellectual human race has been severed for the time, whatever process of restoration (if any) Divine wisdom may have in store for him hereafter. It is not necessary to have the form and parentage only of man. The gorilla has the form and the idiot has the parentage, but there is something yet beyond these without which the true happiness of life, and holiness, and Christianity, can never be realised. If, therefore, it were proved that the primeval savage sprang from that lower race of animals I have spoken of, it would only prove that that barrier had been passed which before prevented the advancement of the race—that a change such as that which would restore an insane person to the possession of his senses and to the use of his natural powers must have taken place. But those powers when once obtained would gradually acquire more strength if cultivated. On the other hand they might (as we well know) be weakened by an habitual disregard of the highest and noblest attributes of our nature, whereby we may lose much of the moral strength and excellence to which we had attained. It will not detract from the discoveries of science if we look back through the vast vista of past ages to the period when the same process of development of some of the lower forms of animal life is found to have been in operation. Still further would it do no harm if it were established that all the various races of men in the

world had not sprung from the same two parents and no others. The Darwinian theory, in fact, almost admits that, because otherwise, it is scarcely possible to suppose that the same two human beings—a single male and a single female—could have been the progenitors of all the vast varieties in the great family of man—the red Indian of America, the black and distinctly defined native of Africa, the yellow Japanese, the white Circassian and the unsociable Esquimaux. Nor is the wide and striking difference between these races to be accounted for by the influence of climate alone, for the Patagonian in his chilly solitudes is as black as the native of New Guinea who swelters all his life under the Line.

We have all of us, I suppose been reared in the same belief, that the whole human race as it now exists has been derived from the three sons of Noah, and every animal from the single pair taken into the ark. Now this theory, taken in connection with Mosaic traditions and Bible chronology, is simply impossible, because we know that 3,000 or 4,000 years ago, within a very short period of the date assigned to the Deluge, the distinctions between the different families of men and women and of animals were as marked and as wide as they are at the present day. (Hear, hear.) Our witnesses are the sculptures and paintings which exist to this day in abundance upon the banks of the Nile, where the Negro and the Fellah are drawn as distinctly and clearly separate from the other characters represented as they would be in our own times. There, too, we find carved as plainly as possible the different kinds of the dog species, the greyhound, the foxhound, and their congeners the wolf and the jackal, long before the "developement" theory could have had time to come into operation. It is scarcely possible, indeed, to imagine that between the given date of the Noachian Deluge and the known dates of these monuments, each of those separate tribes of humanity could have sprung from one family and have become developed into such remarkably distinct races, or those various specimens of the dog have been procured from a single pair. (Hear, hear.)

But just as we cannot suppose it possible that one pair of bees, or buffaloes, or bears, went forth from the ark and spread their progeny over the whole earth, so we cannot conceive that from one pair of mice could have arisen all the numerous varieties of the animal which we find in far off quarters of the globe, separated from one another by wide and mighty oceans which it is impossible that they could have crossed.

In the same way it is impossible to believe that the whole human race could have sprung from one pair; but whether man was developed from some lower race of animals, or whether the Divine Author of the Universe created the human species in different parts of the globe at different or simultaneous periods; yet we find that the same nature is common to them all, differing only upon the question whether or not they are all sprung from the same parents. But shall we on that account refuse to recognize any member of the great human brotherhood? Shall we not on the contrary remember that we have all one common Father, whose creatures we are; whose gift of life beats in all our bosoms, and to do whose will should be the common object of our existence. (Hear, hear.) In one word, if we love God ourselves, can we help loving these brethren of our own because they may have been begotten by different ancestors?

But is there anything to justify us in supposing that mankind had a brute origin? There are certain attributes and characteristics common to every family of the human race, but to none of the lower animals. Take for instance the practice with regard to the burial of the dead. There are races, such as the Bushmen of Africa, the Andamans of India, and others who are but little removed from the brute creation, but who all bury their dead with various rites and ceremonials. I am not aware on the other hand that even the ingenious beaver ever was known to attempt to dig a place for the interment of his dead relatives. There are many animals who dig holes in the ground to bury their food against the time of need, but never to bury one another's bodies. But the most

savage nations that have ever been discovered all make some preparation for the decent burial of their dead, and all perform certain ceremonies which testify to some belief or supposition of another life hereafter. (Hear, hear.) Sir Charles Lyell refers to this in his account of the discoveries he made in exploring the northern base of the Pyrenees; where, although no traces of lions were to be found, the savages of remote ages were wont to bury with their deceased relatives weapons of defence against lions and other ferocious animals. Vague though it was, the "noble savage" running wild in his woods had yet *some* idea of a future state, difficult or impossible as it is for us at this time to trace the grounds of his belief. (Hear, hear.)

So with the Zulus; the book just published by Mr. Clarke shows, that as long back as they can be traced, it was their custom to run about wailing for their dead. Sometimes the corpse is buried in a sitting posture on the same day, most of the garments being buried with it, and the place guarded against disturbance from man or beast. Thus we find some traces of family affection, and also some thoughts of a world to come.

Nor are these feelings merely transient and evanescent. I had occasion to travel northward a few years ago into Zululand. The country was in a great state of disturbance; the old King's life was nearly worn out, and much excitement prevailed. The King had four favourite sons, and amongst the four was one ambitious youth, who had expressed his determination to succeed to his father's kingdom. A violent struggle ensued, and in December, 1856, a bloody battle was fought, in which the forces of King Oomboolasi were nearly all destroyed or devoured by the alligators. Three years afterwards, when I went that way again, the old King pointed out to me the site of the fatal conflict, the traces of which were horribly visible from the skulls lying about the roadside. But one of his boys was left; a boy who was handed by me to the care of the English Government. He has since learned the

art of printing, and also writing, and he now lives not far from my settlement, where I hope soon to join him, and if practicable assist him to be useful in promoting the civilisation of his race.

At this interview the old King, who was known as the "Zulu Tiger" (it was his title in fact, "Yes, Tiger," and "No, Tiger" being the common form of addressing him), was naked, except the ordinary blue blanket and ceinture. He belonged to a tribe known as the "Pushing Wolves," who were always at war with one another, and yet his narrative of the fight, and the loss of his favourite son, was so touching, so full of natural feeling as a husband and a father—so different from the selfish and sensual old man I had once had him described to me, that I was much affected. But what particularly attracted my observation was, his sobbing out at the close of the account of his son's death, "But, oh! they *never buried* him! But I shall go to him, though he will not return to me." The old man's grief was something terrible even at that distance of time, and I could not help thinking of another sorrow-stricken king of old crying out in his anguish, "Oh, Absolom, my son! my my son! would God that I had died for thee."

(The Bishop here read several extracts from his diary, describing in somewhat similar terms other interviews he had had with the Zulu Chief.)

I thank God, and have often thanked God, that I have been commissioned by the Queen of England to be a Preacher and a Teacher to these poor heathen, and when I have at times been asked in not very encouraging tones about my chances of success amongst them, I have always appealed to cases like these; to instances where the natural feelings of a father, a husband, or a brother have been strongly brought into operation, and I have contended, as I do now, that, whether it be in the wigwams and huts of the savage abroad, or in the still more wretched dens of misery and vice to be found nearer home, wherever there are seen traces of this abiding flame of love and natural affection, there are yet grounds for hope of that fallen

being, however degraded in the sight of both God and man. (Cheers.)

As I before remarked, it is not the outward form alone that makes the immeasurable difference between man and other animals. Wherever we find human affections, there we know we have got a human being. We must confess that we see before us one who may be a father or a brother, and we are bound to teach him, as opportunities occur, what we have learned ourselves; not only what we have acquired by our own actual industry and application, but also the knowledge we have gained through the perseverance and researches of others. Most of all, are we bound to impart to him that knowledge of God, in which consists our hopes of Life Eternal, that knowledge with which we have happily been so freely blessed in our native land, the knowledge which has comforted us in every sorrow, and which to this day enables us to sustain our souls calmly and confidently even in the presence of Death himself. Surely our fellow-man has shown his right to receive this blessing at our hands, when he has shown himself capable of appreciating it, and there is nothing to my mind more fitting than that the enlightened Briton should go forth from his beautiful island home, and teach to races less favoured than his own, the inestimable knowledge he himself possesses. (Cheers.) "But (say some of the objectors) while your poor heathen is in this transition state, he will not only acquire, perhaps, some of the virtues, but he will learn all the vices of the higher civilization." My answer is, that, in the first place, I do not think this an absolute necessity, and, in the next place, that we ought not to be deterred by any amount of difficulty, so long as it presented a hope of being ultimately overcome.

I doubt, for instance, whether any amount of missionary preaching or teaching would sweep the Eastern seas of the whole gang of Malay Pirates, or induce entire tribes of savages to summarily relinquish their predatory habits. But if we have the opportunity of teaching Eternal truth to any of these depraved beings, it is for us to do so, leaving the result

to a higher Power than ourselves. Suppose, for example, we have the means of instructing an elder brother to whom may be afterwards handed over the care of younger brothers and sisters, or an aged father and mother. We may rest assured that the brother who had been taught would teach his brothers and sisters (more or less) and that sooner or later the good seed thus sown would bear fruit in eternity. The results of missionary work must of necessity be often very remote, but if we can only succeed in inspiring words of hope—if we can but cheer the listeners to their duty by instilling into their hearts love to God as their father and their friend—if we can but induce attention to the little offices of love and family affection, our efforts will not be without their reward, and even the humble and self-denying labours of the missionary will not have been useless in adding to the glory of the English name. (Cheers.)

The example of many missionaries abroad, is such as might well stir to greater exertions those who live nearer home. If a battle-field be a scene of heroic virtue and self-denial that helps to relieve the state from the horrors of warfare at home, something is, I think, to be said for the self-surrender of time and trouble, and the toils of the pious missionary, pouring out his life day by day for the benefit of his fellow men, with little to cheer him but the consciousness that he is doing God's will, and the hope that the bread thus cast upon the waters, may be returned unto him even though after many days. (Hear, hear.)

But it is time that I should draw this lecture to a close, by telling you some of the actual results of our labours amongst the Zulus. We had a number of boys of four or five years of age come to us for instruction. It is true they were not very smartly or fashionably attired. (A laugh.) One of the speakers at the Anthropological Society, the other evening, spoke of these poor boys relapsing after a time into their old habits and [illegible] rather want of costume (a laugh); but how was [illegible], where the boys had no mothers to

attend to them and make them better ones? "I should like (said one of these youngsters to me one day) to be the last fool in my family" (a laugh), and it is very likely he will have his desire, for he has since sent to me for a book in English that I had written for them in Zulu. Another boy has come back to work as a printer at the Mission Station, and another has sent me month by month reports of his labours, and sheets of his work in the Zulu language, not only printed but revised and corrected by himself, with scarcely a misprint in any of them. What I most admire of all, however, is the lad's patience during my long absence, by reason of delays for which I am not responsible. (Hear, hear.) One of the boys who was brought to me a savage a few years ago, writes to me (in English, mind) thus:—"I am very glad this day that you send me this letter. My heart is so full rejoiced to see what I see, that you wish to return;" and concludes—"Good-bye from all. All who say good-bye are so numerous that I cannot count them." He afterwards goes on to say in another letter, "We have heard you do not believe at all, but we do not believe at all in it. We all believe that you believe Our Father in Heaven, &c. (The Right Rev. Prelate quoted several other letters from catechists and others out in Africa, in a similar strain.)

You will probably have heard by this time of the sort of inquiries which are frequently put to us now-a-days in Africa, upon doctrinal and chronological subjects. Mr. Grout tells us that one of the boys once said to him, "You tell us that God is all-powerful, and that the angels were expelled from Paradise, because they were deceived by the serpent. But why (continued the boy) did the good God allow them to be deceived?" Mr. Grout does not tell us what answer he gave him, or whether he mentioned to him that until the return of the Hebrews from the Babylonish captivity there is no trace of their ever having heard of the Mosaic account of the expulsion from Paradise, which is but simply a reflex of the far more ancient Persian tradition of Harounmasda and Aramanga. (Hear, hear.)

I may here mention that I have lately received an account from a friend of the labours of a brother of an old Zulu chief, who has been conducting the services at the Mission since I left. "Jonathan (says my friend) preached the other Sunday, when I went out there. He spoke of right and wrong. When a man has done wrong in secret (said Jonathan), he does not have to wait for the world to find it out for him, but condemns it at once. So, whenever he does a good action. Whatever was right was right, and whatever was wrong was wrong. It was one of two things, and must be so whether our learning was great or small, and that was the meaning of the phrase, 'Whatever was bound on earth was bound in Heaven.' Right is right, and to think otherwise would be just as wrong as to imagine that a sane man would plant a crop of thistles."

One of our poets has said

> "No compound on this earthly ball
> Is like another all in all."

In like manner there is no accounting for the changes in our religion that have occurred in the course of our admixture with the Latin and other races. When I am asked, "What is to be done with the blacks?" I reply that our religion cannot be considered to be well tried until it has been tried for the blacks as well as for the whites. You can form an approximate idea now of how some of my scholars and catechists have turned out, and I adhere still to the opinion that we are bound to communicate to our fellow men those results of science which God has revealed to us, not only for our own particular benefit, but (as I contend), as stewards for others who have not had similar opportunities of gaining knowledge. It appears to me that it would be not only absurd but criminal to try to keep back from the heathen the fact that we have discovered many time honoured traditions to be errors. Such, for instance, are those which relate to the modern antiquity of man, the [illegible]bility of the flood having occurred as described, [illegible] whole human race was doomed to endless woe

for the first man's sin, or that death, and the pangs of child-birth, are the consequences of the curse then pronounced. (Cheers).

We are told that we must strive to do away with that pliant belief in witchcraft which has been the cause of such bloody crimes in nearly all ages of the world; and which only a century or so ago was popularly believed amongst those who called themselves Christians (as Leckie remarks). Luther himself says, "I would have no mercy upon these witches." At Toulouse, not far from that time, we read of 400 being put to death at a single execution and hundreds more in other towns. One of the judges (we are told) actually boasted that he had personally been the means of putting to death over 800 witches. In the year 1664 a traveller mentions that at Leith he saw nine witches burning together, and the Earl of Mar tells us of women sitting writhing in agony in the flames. When we remember that these things were taking place in Scotland only recently—that they were formerly a part of the religious system of England—and that a witch was burnt alive in Scotland as lately as the year of our Lord 1722, how can we talk to savages about the barbarities of the heathen and the refinements of civilised Christianity? (Cheers.) These deeds, be it remembered, were not done by Spanish Inquisitors but by Puritan Scotland, and it is difficult to find any grounds for sympathy or excuse for such acts. We are told by the authorities of the period that the only way of getting a confession from a witch was believed to be by putting a chain across her mouth and fastening her up by it in such a manner that she could not lie down. If she attempted to go to sleep she was continually roused up by men who prevented her obtaining any sort of rest. It was also one of the received notions of the age that a witch would never confess while she could get drink. Thirst was, therefore, usually added to the other tortures inflicted. Another delusion was that there would always be found a spot in the witch's body insensible to pain, and the consequence was that the poor victim was exposed to a regular

system of pricking and puncturing all over her body, to discover what was supposed to be the infallible sign of her guilt. All these were in addition to the "perriwinkie," and other mechanical means of torture which make one's blood run cold. (Hear, hear.)

But what are we to say when told that we are to go out and lecture the Zulus, who sometimes destroy their victims by tying them down to be eaten alive by ants, or chain them down and destroy them by a process which it is not possible for me to describe?

Still further, what are we to say to them when told in the same breath that we must impress on their minds as truth the story of the witch of Endor? Only lately in Australia we have heard of its being put forward that the proper punishment of adultery in former ages was stoning to death, and that if it was a good punishment then, it is equally good now. (Hear, hear.) I, however, am not for this extreme. I am one of those who believe that, without any detriment to true religion, the Divine origin of some portion of the Scriptures may be safely abandoned. There were, no doubt, many of the clergy who believed in the justice of the enactments against witchcraft, in the times to which I have just alluded, and it may be that this dogma of an infallible Bible will be still maintained by some of the clergy, in opposition to all the science and learning of the age, long after the great bulk of educated laymen have given it up. When I remember that a poor old Frenchman was not long ago done to death by a pitiless mob in Essex, I cannot but think that a grave responsibility attaches to those clergymen who keep up the tenet of John Wesley, that to give up witchcraft was to give up the Bible, (Hear, hear.)—that to give up the story of the rib being turned into the woman, or of the donkey talking to Balaam in the ordinary language of Christians, would be to sacrifice all our hopes of happiness in another world, and to give up the highest and dearest consolation of our religion. But then do we teachers of the modern school really wish to abolish the Bible? is is imputed to us, because we cannot

avoid the necessity of showing it to be infallible? Do we really wish to leave you joyless and hopeless, to grope your way alone in the dark? God forbid. Rather we seek to establish your faith, not, indeed, in a mere book, but in that living word which speaks in the Book, and which still speaks by the lips of the Apostles and the Prophets for all ages, and in all ages; those good men and true, whose hearts God's Holy Spirit quickened to be the bearers of the message of truth to their fellow-men. (Cheers.) We believe that in the Bible we have the earliest teachings of that religion which was sent to lead man out of darkness into light, and out of confusion and ignorance into the full knowledge of the Living God. But we believe, also, that these divine teachings are still going on in all the new and wondrous revelations of science, in all the deep thoughts that are thereby stirred within our hearts, and that the proper application of those teachings is in fact the end and the highest purpose of the life of man. (Loud cheers.)

The proceedings were terminated by a unanimous vote of thanks.

Emily Faithfull, Printer in Ordinary to Her Majesty, Victoria Press, 83A Farringdon Street, E.C.

00059300

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016